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The Republican Party---Its Present Duties and Past Achievements, and Democratic Repudiation.

SPEECH

HON. JASPER PACKARD, OF INDIANA.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 5, 1870.

Mr. Speaker, it is my good fortune never to have belonged to any political party but that which has been known since 1855, I believe, as the Republican party. You will naturally and correctly conclude that I feel a warm affection for a party in which I found my first and only political home; a party with which I began my political life, and in which I hope to close my natural life; a party from which I have never had and have now no desire to wander; a party which has done grander and better things than any other party which has ever had an existence on American soil, which has linked its name with liberty, and which stands to-day, as it has for the last fifteen years, the true and the only exponent of the principles which underlie our governmental edifice. Of this great party it is my purpose to spend the brieftime allowed me in calm but earnest speech, reserving a few minutes, if possible, for a glance at that party which has thrown itself across the pathway of the Republicans in every one of the great measures given to the country in the last ten years.

Has the Republican party a future? I believe it has; but there are conditions on which its future existence depends, and with the fulfillment of those conditions its future existence is as secure as its past history is immortal. What has our party done? What has it yet to do? I will answer the last question first:

1. The leading measure of Republican policy at this moment, the grand issue of the hour, is the perfection of political equality by the final ratification of the fifteenth constitutional amendment. I will not argue the question. I regard it as a work already accomplished, and I name it only because we hear it said sometimes that with the passage of this grand charter of liberty, equality, and fraternity, the mission of the Republican party will be ended; that new parties will then arise founded on new issues, and the present party organizations will cease to be. This is a mistaken notion. It is true that parties grow out of particular issues, but they also represent tendencies of the human mind. There is always a progressive element, a class of men with whom not to go forward is to go backward; and there is a class of men whose eyes are in the back part of their heads, and who are always looking to the rear. There is a new spirit and an old. The hope of the one is in the future, the other clings to the past. The one is young and vigorous, moving onward with the stride of a giant; the other is old, and loves its age, and rattles its dry bones, and loves the sound, and scatters ashes on every growing thing, and calls itself

"Conservative." The one is Rome, the other is Carthage; the one is Luther, the other is the Pope; the one is Cromwell, the other is Charles; the one is Washington, the other is George III; the one is freedom, the other is human bondage; the one is Grant, the other is Lee; the one is the Republican party, the other is modern Democracy. Here is the "irrepressible conflict." It has always existed, it always will exist. As physical light and darkness antagonize so do moral light and darkness. As the former will continue to exist while the material universe endures, so will the latter while the moral world remains. But light is more potent than darkness, and the new spirit is stronger than the old. When the two forces meet the new always triumphs over the old. In every contest of principles this will always be the case. It triumphed in our early history; it won on the battle-fields of the South; it gained its cause when the great jury of the people rendered their verdict in November last; and when a crowning triumph is achieved, in the final passage of the fifteenth amendment, in spite of the persistent, stubborn, and factious opposition of the Democratic party, two political organizations will remain; the one characterized as now by the fire of youth, the other by the wheeziness of age; and they will be judged according to their past career and future tendency. They that believe in progress founded on intelligence will follow the Republican faith; they that love darkness rather than light will find their fitting home in the Democratic party.

2. When the fifteenth amendment is adopted, when political equality is established as the fundamental law of the nation, it will become the duty of the Republican party to enforce, protect, and defend the Constitution, with all its amendments, especially the last two, which are more likely to be violated. I believe that Congress has full power of legislation to so control the States as to prevent any violation of the Constitution either in letter or in spirit. I regret that truth compels me to say that violations have been of frequent occurrence; and in one instance, at least, the remedy has been applied. Georgia has learned that we are a nation. We must take the ground that Congress may legislate for the enforcement of any provision of the Constitution, and may coerce a refractory State, no less than a refractory individual. Would I destroy the rights of the States? By no means. I would give the State every right to which it is entitled under the Constitution, but I totally repudiate the pernicious heresy of the sovereignty of the State;

"The United States shall guaranty to every State in this Union a republican form of government."

So speaks the Constitution, uttering the voice of the nation. The term "United States" here, means the Government of the United States. That Government operates through a law of Congress executed by the Executive, and perhaps in certain contingencies reviewed by the judicial tribunals. Now, what is this "republican form of government" which the "United States" is bound to "guaranty" to the State? I hold that the phrase "republican form of government" derives all its force and meaning from the Constitution itself. A "republican form of government" means just what the Constitution of the United States has made it mean. All of us have a general idea of a republican government as distinguished from a monarchy or an aristocracy; and in general terms it is a government where the people rule through representatives chosen by themselves. But republican governments need not always be exactly alike in all their details. They are not so. A republican form of government under a general constitution must partake of and be in accord with the spirit of that constitution. If our Constitution upheld and sanctioned human slavery a State might have a "republican form of government" as pronounced in that Constitution, and yet be a slave State.

Before the furnace-blast of war blew our eyes open most of us were ready to admit that the Constitution of the United States gave countenance and even protection to the institution of slavery. If this construction was correct, then the slave States had republican forms of government. If such a construction was not the correct one, then the slave States did not have republican forms of government, and the United States, in the exercise of that sovereignty which is inherent in the nation, should have executed the guarantee by breaking every yoke and letting the oppressed go free. I believe the United States should have done this; I believe the Constitution was free in spirit and intended to "secure the blessings of liberty" to all alike, and hence that was no republican form of government which held in bondage any portion of its people. But suppose the Constitution had had an additional article expressly protecting slavery, then I admit that under that Constitution a "republican form of government" might have been consistent with the institution of slavery.

Suppose this were so until the thirteenth constitutional amendment was adopted. Manifestly, then, the phrase "republican form of government" would mean something different from what it did before. It would henceforth mean, beyond a doubt, the absolute freedom of all the people of the State. And after the adoption of the fourteenth constitutional amendment the meaning of the phrase was still more enlarged, and it came at once to mean complete civil rights under the law and equal citizenship for all the people of the State; and where this is refused by law or constitution there is not a "republican form of government." Kentucky is not republican in her government to-day. She does not approach the meaning of the phrase as measured by the Constitution of the United States, and a "republican form of government" should be "guarantied" to her and maintained by the whole power of the nation. And as soon as we reach the adoption of the fifteenth constitutional amendment the phrase so often quoted will take a new and larger meaning still; and that State will not be republican in form, as measured by the Constitution of the United States, which does not secure the absolute political equality of all its citizens. Entire freedom of the ballot, purity of elections, and the right of every man to vote and speak his honest sentiments—these are essential elements of a "republican form of government," and must be "guarantied" to and in "every State of this Union."

But what if a State shall exchange a republican for an anti-republican form of government? What if Pennsylvania should provide in her constitution that no one should hold office in that State but iron manufacturers, or New York should say that the governorship of that State should be forever vested in the heirs male of Walter Van Twiller; or Ohio should disfranchise all except men with red hair? What if Indiana should provide that none but straight-haired men should sit in her Legislature? What if Georgia should say that none but white men should hold office; or Mississippi should provide that none but black men should ever be elected to the United States Senate? Could there be found no remedy for these anti-republican grievances? This is just what the guarantee is for. It is the remedy. We find in the Federalist these words—they are almost prophetic. Without a guarantee—

"Usurpation might raise its standard and trample upon the liberties of the people, while the national Government could legally do nothing more than behold the encroachments with indignation and regret. A successful faction might erect a tyranny on the ruins of order and law, while no succor could be constitutionally afforded by the Union to the friends and supporters of the Government."

The conclusion is that "with a guarantee such succor can be afforded."

In further support of the view I am now presenting let me quote a sentence from the speech of Daniel Webster, made in the Senate in 1830:

"There are in the Constitution grants of power to Congress, and restrictions on these powers. There are also prohibitions on the States. Some authority must, therefore, necessarily exist having the ultimate jurisdiction to fix and ascertain the interpretation of these grants, restrictions, and prohibitions. The Constitution has itself pointed out, ordained, and established that authority. How has it accomplished this great and essential end? By declaring that the Constitution and the laws of the United States made in pursuance thereof shall be the supreme law of the land, 'anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding.'"

And Chief Justice Marshall, who ought to be high authority, says, in the case of *Cohens vs. Virginia*:

"There is certainly nothing in the circumstances under which our constitution was formed, nothing in the history of the times, which would justify the opinion that the confidence reposed in the States was so implicit as to leave in them and their tribunals the power of resisting or defeating, in the form of law, the legitimate measures of the Union."

Now, how shall this guarantee be enforced? Through the courts and by appropriate legislation. And when the law is passed it becomes the duty of the Executive to execute the law. The view of this subject which I have advanced, and which I hold must be adopted and made universally applicable by the Republican party, is important at this time and appropriate; for Congress has recently had and still has on hand some cases of the guarantee.

I know it may seem to some that the principle I have adopted is fraught with danger to the power and influence of the States, and will lead to the consolidation and centralization of the Government. I am not afraid of this. I am more afraid of the unrestrained power of the States. Whence has come danger in the past? In every instance from the States, until at last a large part of them madly struck at the nation's life. We are a mighty nation, in size as well as in material resources. We already have one ocean on the east, another on the west, and are destined to have a third on the north; while on the south the sea will not form the limits of territorial expansion; but the outlying islands will be welcomed under the folds of the flag of the free. With such a vast territorial area, embracing all the zones of the earth's grand circle; with citizens of every clime and nation of the globe, with interests as diversified as the scenery of the continent, the slightest political convulsion would shiver our social edifice to fragments unless we have power at the center—power sufficient to hold all the parts of the nation in one harmonious and homogeneous whole. So far from this consolidation tending to the destruction of our liberties it is our best guarantee of protection for freedom, our only sufficient safety; for it will give us a nation powerful enough to protect its own existence and the life and liberty of its humblest citizen. With the complete acknowledgment that "we are a nation," and not a conglomeration of thirty-seven distinct nations, we shall enter on a new career of power and prosperity, on "heights unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." Then we shall speedily realize, on a magnificent scale, the gorgeous language of Milton:

"Methinks I see in my mind a noble, puissant nation, rousing herself, like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam."

Though I love my State of Indiana, yet when I stand on a battle-field of the nation, or anywhere under the flag, I cannot help saying, do not call me an Indian here; call me an American citizen, the proudest title on earth. As an Indian I am a foreigner to the inhabitant of every other State, but as an American I am the fellow-citizen of the men of Maine and California, of South Carolina and Texas. It may be distasteful, but it is none the less true, that our institutions of government tend to centralization. It is well for reflecting men to consider it. This centralizing tendency would be dangerous in an ignorant and animalized nation, but among an intelligent people it is not, for they will mould it according to their wishes. The power will be exerted at the center, but it

will be furnished from the extremities; and the people's liberties will be as safe as if the power was exerted by all the extremities—much safer; for the Government will be as completely in the hands of the people, and it will be sufficiently powerful to protect all its citizens in all their rights and liberties.

Think of the pleading wail of the Continental Congress and of the inability of the "Confederation" to touch individuals; and then think of the vigor of a nation that is one consolidated power, as witnessed in its ability to cope successfully with a revolt of a third of her people occupying more than the half of her territory. Our centralization is one of reason, and commands my admiration. Were it a centralization of brute force it would merit condemnation. Were the remote parts of our country difficult of access to each other and to the center this concentration of power could scarcely take place, and would be more dangerous if it did. The steamboat strengthened the unity of the nation; and when the locomotive reduced a fatiguing day's journey to a pleasant trip of a few minutes, political power concentrated still more rapidly and surely; but it was reserved for the telegraph to put it in the power of the central Government to reach in a few seconds the most remote parts of her borders and govern a continent as readily as a single city.

Recent utterances in Congress and elsewhere show that the old strife between the States and the nation is not yet ended. In such a struggle I do not hesitate here and now to take my stand on the side of the nation. On this question of the power of States the Democratic party is still living in the year 1798. The Republican party has gone largely beyond that; but the events of the last ten years, even the events of the last two months, have shown us that we must go a step further, and maintain the power of Congress, under the "guarantee" clause of the Constitution and the recent amendments, to check by "appropriate legislation" any failure of any State to secure for all her citizens complete civil and political equality.

3. Another work for the Republican party to do is to purify the ballot. Through the ballot the nation speaks, and we want to hear no uncertain sound; we want to know that we hear the clear, undisguised voice of the people. We know that frequently in some portions of our country an election would be a farce, were it not that it is a fraud and a crime. If last November the electoral vote of the States had been so close as to have given the decision to the State of New York, the repeaters of the city of New York would have been the real masters of the American people, fraudulently imposing upon the people a class of rulers against whom they had uttered a voice of condemnation. The violation of the purity of the ballot is a high crime; it ought to be regarded as such, and punished accordingly. In a monarchy, to commit an offense against the person of the sovereign is the highest crime known to the law. Here the ballot is the sovereign, and offenses against it ought to be deemed a towering crime, and the offender should be treated as a felon.

4. I come now to a subject which I approach with confidence, and yet with a feeling of mortification and shame, that so foul a blot yet remains to find a home on American soil. At the Republican National Convention of the year 1856, a platform was adopted, one article of which pronounced sentence of condemnation against those "twin relics of barbarism, slavery and polygamy." The one has gone down before the advancing tread of freedom; the other still exists, not couchant but rampant, boldly defying the Government and hurling its threats of resistance into the face of the nation. A gigantic crime, a crime condemned alike by the laws of man and the laws of God, flouts its hideous and shameless criminality before the eyes of the world, and covers its vileness by pleading the "rights of

conscience." Would we permit the "conscientious" Hindoo mother to cast her child into the Potomac, were she living here instead of on the banks of the Ganges, or permit the widow to immolate herself on the funeral pile of her dead husband? What if Brigham Young should have a new revelation, authorizing him to put to death one half his wives, and giving his followers a like privilege? What if it should be revealed to that conscientious and exceedingly religious gentleman that three-fourths of the male children should be put to death? For his murders he would claim divine authority, as he claims it for his present crimes, and would again defy the nation to touch him.

The Republican party must go back to its early faith. There never was a grander plank in a political platform than that which was adopted at Philadelphia in 1856. It should become a living faith to-day. Of the "twin relics of barbarism" one is dead; let the other die. Cut out the monstrous cancer. Exterminate its root and branch. They say they will resist. What if they do? Have we not power sufficient to compel submission? If it needs the sword and bayonet to teach Mormondom obedience to law, then use the sword and bayonet. I would have obedience to law in that locality as well as everywhere under the flag. I would have it peaceably if I could, but forcibly if I must; and I would liberate the white slaves of Utah, as we liberated the black slaves of the South. No man believes in freedom of opinion more thoroughly than I do. I believe fully in the liberty to worship God according to the dictates of conscience; but I do not believe in making this right a cover for a hideous crime. These Mormons tell us plainly that they will not obey the laws, that they will not give up their "peculiar institution;" that they will drive out of the Territory any officers of the United States who go there and attempt to enforce the laws; and yet we have lain "supinely on our backs" for years as if inviting them to "bind us hand and foot." I confess I do not like this tender-footed way of touching a great criminal. I would use the whole power of the nation to strike it down at a blow. It ought to be done. It must be done. I look to the Republican party to right this great wrong. I go back to the promise made in its youth, and I call upon it to redeem the pledge. This must be a part of its great work. It belongs to our mission as a party. We have said it, and shall we not perform?

5. There is still other work for the party to do, which I can now only name, as there is not time for entering into detail. The measures I now mention should be secured because the Republican party has control of the Government, and will be held responsible. It must reduce the expenses of the nation to the lowest possible point by the practice of a rigid economy, and it must secure a reduction of the interest on the public debt, so that by reduced interest and reduced expenditures we shall be able to lessen taxation. With economy of administration—and we are having it now, and shall continue to have it—and with a lower rate of interest on the public debt, we may cut down taxes materially, and yet be able to pay off each year a portion of the principal of the debt. We like to see the debt diminishing; but there is a possibility of paying it off faster than is necessary. I want to see the debt diminishing. I want to have it all the time in the course of gradual extinction. But I should be satisfied with the payment of less than one hundred millions per year—with the payment of one half that amount, or even one quarter of it.

The percentage of debt upon the whole property of the United States is gradually decreasing with the constant yearly increase in the value of that property, and the average amount due from each individual in the United States is decreasing by the constant increase of our population. Besides, if we take away from the people and the property of the country a portion

of the burdens now borne by them, both will increase faster still, the one in value, the other in number. I know it sounds well to have it to say that our public debt is being diminished at the rate of \$100,000,000 per year; and if our attention is directed solely to the effect upon the nation in its corporate existence as a Government, it would meet my hearty approval. But there is another side. What is the effect on the people? If the heavy taxation requisite to raise \$100,000,000 in liquidation of debt each year, cripples the industry and productive energies of the people, the good to the Government is more than counterbalanced by the evil suffered by the people.

If the debt were funded in long bonds bearing from three and a half to four and a half per cent., the people could very well afford to pay that interest and use the money themselves rather than to be heavily taxed to pay it. A large amount of the principal each year. To illustrate: suppose my share and my neighbor's share of the public debt is just \$100 each, and we have the privilege of paying it off now or letting it run twenty-five years by the payment of four per cent. interest; he withdraws his \$100 from productive use and hands it over to the Government, abstracting just so much from his productive capital, where it might have been so employed as to double in five years; I determine to pay the interest on my share of the debt, letting the principal run, and for want of a better investment I loan the \$100 at eight per cent., which I can very readily do in Indiana, and at the end of the year I hand over four dollars to the Government and I lay away four dollars in my private drawer. The years roll round, as you know years will, until twenty-five years have come and gone. I have received my interest regularly on my money; I have paid my dues regularly to the Government; I have \$100 principal to hand over in full liquidation of my debt; I have \$100 interest in my private drawer to transfer to my pocket to replace the money just paid to the Government; I have paid off my debt, and it has not cost me a cent. But I would do better than this. I would make money by the operation; for I should invest the interest each year as well as the principal. This illustrates the advantage of what I propose; not to hasten the payment of the debt by an enormous amount each year, which must be drawn from the people by taxation; but secure a reduction of the rate of interest, and then let the people have the benefit of the loan by giving them a long time in which to pay it off.

A moment more on another branch of the financial question and I will relieve your patience from a further consideration of this proverbially dull subject. We should enlarge or change the national banking system so as to make it free, thus giving to the West and South a greater volume of currency and relieving the stringency that prevails now to an alarming extent. The new bank issues should be based on bonds bearing not to exceed three and a half or four per cent., and the Government "legal tender" should be withdrawn at the rate of seventy-five dollars for every \$100 issued by the banks. The banks would, of course, be obliged to redeem their issues in "lawful money," and there being no "lawful money" except specie and "greenbacks," when the greenbacks are all retired the banks must redeem in specie, and thus we shall have found a haven of financial rest, gradually and smoothly and without any perceptible shock.

Thus with interest diminished, with a uniform currency as good as gold in any State, we shall be able to continue our reductions of taxes and place many articles of necessity and raw materials on the free list. Thus we shall relieve the people from the burden of the war taxes, which they have borne so patiently and grandly.

Before I come to the second branch of my subject, perhaps you will indulge me while I say in a word or two what the Republican party ought

not to do. It ought not, it must not, it never can or will, give countenance to any form of repudiation of the national debt. It must not fail to hold the Government up to the complete fulfilment of all its pledges.

I now turn from what the republican party is to do to what it has done; and although you know its proud history well, yet it is not improper to revive occasionally the memory of its grand achievements. I stood once on a height which overlooked the town of Chattanooga, almost encircled by rebel encampments. General Sherman stood there with a field-glass in his hand, watching intently the movements of the troops of General Thomas. They marched out on the plain and advanced directly toward the foot of Mission Ridge. There was a crash of musketry, the rebel skirmishers gave way, and the first line of rebel works was transferred to "God's country." General Sherman turned to his officers, and said he, "They have enlarged the area of freedom a little."

The Republican party has enlarged the area of freedom until no foot of American soil is cursed with the shame of human bondage; and it has written the word "Liberty" on the flag in flaming letters of light. The issues involved in the campaign of 1856 arose from the institution of slavery, hostile alike to free government and the freedom of man. This was the first campaign of the Republican party. Like a young athlete, it went into the fight and battled with tremendous vigor against its powerful antagonist. It retired discomfited but undismayed, and strengthened for a renewal of the conflict. The year 1860 crowned it with victory, and the new President, its noblest representative, took in his hands the Government on the blackest 4th of March the nation ever saw.

During the campaign a large portion of the opposing party had freely made threats of deadly hostility to the Government in the event of the success of the Republicans. Claiming the right of secession, they boldly declared their purpose to destroy the Union, and no sooner was the result known than they proceeded to put their threats into execution. The inauguration of Abraham Lincoln took place when the Government was almost in a state of chaos. Seven States had passed ordinances of secession; numerous acts of war had been committed; all the forts on the southern coast except three had been seized; the Government had been plundered of all its property located in the South; guns were planted on the Mississippi, and that river was blockaded; United States vessels going to provision the starving garrison of Fort Sumter had been fired on and driven off.

The leaders of the secession conspiracy seemed to have forgotten their country, the Union of these States, and thought only of slavery and its perpetuation; but the people of the North, arising in the plenitude of their power, thought only of the Union and its perpetuation. They saw the integrity of the Union threatened, the Constitution boldly and defiantly violated in its most essential articles, the laws disregarded, the property of the United States seized by armed mobs; and the questions came home. Shall the Union be maintained? Shall the Constitution be respected? Shall the laws be enforced? Shall the public property, the forts and arsenals of the United States, be protected? They could answer these questions affirmatively, for the Union party was steering the ship of State, and the Government was something more than a rope of sand.

The last message of Mr. Buchanan had taught the absurd doctrine that a State had no right to secede, but if it did secede the Government had no right to coerce it to submission. But Mr. Lincoln found the right and power, too, and the Republicans sustained him. And this is what the great Union party has done. Gathering into its fold all of every party who preferred their country to party ties, it nobly met every demand made by the

Government upon the people. It voted men and money for carrying on the war. Nor was this all: it furnished them liberally and cheerfully. It used every means and appliance of warfare, and it used them with a vigor and power not surpassed if equaled in the annals of history. At last it succeeded in overthrowing a rebellion the fiercest and most powerful that in the history of this world every rose or fell. This great task of the Union party, thus successfully accomplished, is sufficient to elevate it above the sphere of common party politics, and make it preeminently the party of the nation.

I rejoice that it is my proud privilege to belong to a party thus eminently patriotic. I have almost envied the men who achieved our independence, who threw off the yoke of Great Britain, who fought seven long years that they might leave an inheritance of freedom to their posterity. But if the Whigs of the Revolution were the founders of the nation, the Unionists of our day are its saviours. If Washington was the Father of his Country, Lincoln and Grant and Stanton and Sherman and Sheridan and Thomas, and the rest of the boys in blue, are its defenders and protectors.

The Republican party never once faltered. It always stood firmly by the nation during that terrible crisis which sometimes caused our hearts to sink within us, and blanched even the cheek of the stoutest with gloom and sadness. It was for the Union first, last, and all the time. It adopted the words of the iron man of Tennessee, "the Union must and shall be preserved;" and it added, "peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must." It furnished no traitors to take arms against the Government, none to kindle a "fire in the rear;" but, shoulder to shoulder, its serried columns met every onset of the foe, with bayonets and bullets in front and with ballots in the rear, and it moved steadily on like an avenging Nemesis until its enemies cried, "Hold, enough!" Before it took up arms against the insurrectionists it tried every expedient that patriotism could suggest; it consented to every measure that was at all consistent with the honor and safety of the nation. But nearly every State in which the Democratic party had control was fully determined to cut loose from a Government which they boasted they had ruled for fifty years. All peaceful efforts failed. The clash of arms was inevitable, but there was a powerful party upon which the nation could lean for support. It took our beloved land on its Atlantean shoulders and bore it with safety and honor through the terrible conflict.

And in the midst of the mighty struggle which had been thrust upon us our party did not forget its great mission of freedom and justice. When the Republican party was first organized our banner, the ensign of freedom, floated over four million slaves. We boasted that this was a land of liberty, while four million bondmen stretched forth their bleeding hands to heaven, and with each revolving year, the chains were tightened and the gashes deepened. The institution of slavery was hostile to freedom and to everything that bore the name of freedom. It was hostile to free speech and a free press; hostile to free schools and free States, and it stood in direct antagonism to the great idea which underlies the structure of our Government. Every nation has its leading idea. The leading idea of Rome was dominion. Greece's leading idea, one which rendered her immortal, was æsthetic cultivation. The leading idea of France is glory; that of England is aristocratic distinctions; while the great idea on which our Government is founded is the Rights of Man. But in deadly hostility to this fundamental idea of the Republic stood the institution of slavery. It was the "execrable shape" that "thrust its miscreated front athwart our way." At the very inception of the Republican organization, it proclaimed

its unalterable determination that the Territories of the United States should be forever consecrated to freedom; that yonder empire of freedom, stretching away toward the setting sun, should never bear the tread of slaves. It never has, and thank God it never will; and next to him our thanks are due the great Union liberty-loving Republican party; and we owe to it, under God, the still greater glory that not only are the Territories free, but every rood of American soil, and the folds of the flag of liberty cover no longer a single slave. For long years Freedom, like the dove that went out from the ark, found no resting place for her feet in this land of ours. Liberty was dead and buried in this nation. It had been wrapped in grave clothes and laid in the tomb. The Republican party stood at the door of the sepulcher and knocked, and cried with a loud voice, "Liberty, come forth!" And Liberty came forth bound hand and foot, and they loosed her and let her go. Four millions of broken fetters fell to the earth: four millions of human chattels became four millions of men.

"He rose a man who laid him down a slave,
Shook from his locks the ashes of the grave;
And outward trod,
Into the glorious liberty of God."

The Republican party has stamped the word "compromise," in its odious, political sense, out of existence. At the beginning of our difficulties with the South the opposing party cried "compromise," and we went on compromising with a gigantic crime until the life of the nation had well-nigh gone out. In an old Arabian story it is related that there was once a fox who was growing old. One night he engaged in a foraging expedition and stayed out until the sun was risen and every one at work, when he found it dangerous to return to his den. So he lay down by the roadside and pretended he was dead, saying, "Patience; in patience there is safety." Soon a man came along and kicked him to be sure that he was dead. Then came another, who amused himself by pulling out the fox's whiskers. The fox only said "Patience." Next came a hunter. "A fox's nail is a good remedy for a felon," said he, as he whipped out his knife and cut off a paw. "Patience," said the fox to himself, "it is better to live with three paws than die with four." Then came a woman bearing a child on her shoulder. "The fox's teeth," said she, "will make a beautiful necklace for my baby." So the fox let himself be robbed of his teeth, repeating "patience," and lay still until a last thief tore out his heart. Need I make the application? The nation had become the slave of southern Democrats. Life seemed to have deserted her; she was kicked and cuffed and insulted; and her only response was "compromise." Her nails were cut off, and she compromised: her teeth were drawn, and she compromised. Then traitors grasped at her heart, and the Democracy called vehemently to her to compromise; but a new spirit, that of Republicanism, had entered into and possessed her, and she arose in her might and struck down the traitorous hands that grasped at her heart's blood.

When once we compound with crime we know not where to stop; and had the nation continued her feeble course of compromise treason in the guise of Democracy would have eaten away her life. That the nation was not so destroyed is due to the Republican party. It determined that freedom and not slavery was national. For its principles its members were willing to fight; and when rebels rose in arms against the nation's life they took their lives in their hands and their muskets on their shoulders, slung their knapsacks, filled their haversacks, bid good-bye to home and home comforts, and dared all the toils of the march and the stern trials of the battle to show the world that "freemen dare be free." They fought to make the Union firmer and better than it was, and the Constitution freer and more just. There is something better in this land than

Union or Constitution. Man himself is better than either. The individual man for whom free governments are instituted is infinitely higher and better than laws or constitutions. It was to secure freedom for man that our Government was founded, that the Union was established, the Constitution framed; and in so far as they failed to secure this object, they needed correction. In so far as the Constitution worked unequally and unjustly it needed correction. In so far as it failed to secure liberty it failed in the great end of Republican Government and needed correction. We should not conceive a government to be worth much that failed to secure us in our natural and civil rights and liberties.

The Republican party fought for the Union not alone, but with it for the liberty it was formed to secure; it fought for the Constitution not alone, but with it for the civil rights and liberties of every citizen within its jurisdiction. It fought for a Union that should be superior to States, and could not be broken up and destroyed at the behests of traitors. It fought for a Constitution that should guaranty freedom to every son and daughter of the Republic. It fought for a Constitution that should not select one kind of property and give it a large representation in Congress and refuse representation to all other kinds. It fought for a Constitution that should give no more privileges nor power to a citizen of South Carolina than to a citizen of Indiana. We fought to bury forever the days of Pierce and Buchanan, when the right of secession was recognized, when the first and highest allegiance was held to be due to the State, and when freedom of speech and of the press was as dead in the South under slavery as it was two years ago under Andrew Johnson. Four years of war meant something. It was more than a gigantic prize-fight. The war was fought that a Government of the people might not perish from the earth; to smite down those who struck at the nation's existence; to establish the fact that the Constitution is supreme over all the land, the will of any State to the contrary notwithstanding; and for myself, I fought that liberty in this land might be perpetual, that the nation might cease to regard distinctions of caste and color, that we might reach the *penetralia* of the temple of liberty, that we might burst the thongs that bound us to the car of slavery, and on the wreck of shattered systems and institutions build the altar of freedom sacred to the Brotherhood of Man.

In the campaign of 1856 the question that was written upon the political firmament was: "Shall slavery be extended all over this land?" Though beaten in the contest, the people of the free North uttered an emphatic "No!" as their answer to the question. In the years 1860 and 1861 another question was answered. In this land founded by Washington, dedicated to freedom, an asylum for the oppressed of all nations, the freest land, in theory, within the circuit of the sun, the people saw written on the political firmament the strange and terrible question: "Shall the nation perish at the hands of rebels and traitors?" Clear, sharp, and piercing rang out the answer, "No!" Four battle-years made good the answer, and a nation preserved stood a monument to the struggles of a patriotic people. In the year 1866 the question came, "Shall the rebellious States be restored on the basis of universal freedom?" And the people answered "Yes! Let justice be done; let the boon of liberty be the inheritance of every man; let the poorest and humblest citizen be the equal before the law of the richest and most powerful."

In 1868 the people, again speaking through the Republican party, declared that reconstruction on the basis of equal rights for all men should be carried out until it stood as the law of the land. The platform, the candidates, the papers, and the orators of the opposing party told us that the reconstruction acts of Congress were "unconstitutional, revolutionary,

and void," and that they should be "trampled into the dust." But the voice of the people was heard; and if not the voice of a god, it is at least the voice of the only sovereign we acknowledge, and this ringing voice declared in unmistakable tones that the reconstruction measures, founded on liberty and justice and protection for all, shall stand not only as the law of the land, but as a cardinal principle in our governmental policy, settling it for all time to come that this nation stands on the broad basis of universal freedom.

The Republican party has decreed justice for all the dwellers under the jurisdiction of our Constitution. This great nation cannot afford to be unjust, not even to the humblest of God's creatures. A government of the people must be *for* the people and *by* the people, for and by all of them.

The Republican party has decreed protection for every man on every foot of American soil. In this afternoon of the nineteenth century, but a few months more than a year ago, in this nation of freemen, there were thousands who voted their honest sentiments only at the imminent risk of their lives, and thousands more who, under a Ku Klux Klan reign of terror, dared not attempt to exercise the right of suffrage. And strange as it may seem, strange as it must appear to other nations, strange as it will sound in history, it was the nation's enemy who was protected in the expression of his will at the ballot-box, while the humble friend of the nation was left "defenseless to his enemies." And stranger yet, it was the traitor, stained with the blood of the nation's defenders, who stripped from the nation's friends the rights which he claimed and exercised for himself. Thank God for the better time coming, for the decree of the Republican party that protection shall be guaranteed to every man on whatever square foot of American soil he may stand, that he may speak his honest sentiments and be protected; that he may sing Yankee Doodle, Hail Columbia, Rally Round the Flag, or even Old John Brown and be protected; that he may vote his political sentiments and for whom he pleases, and be protected! But I am dwelling too long on this pleasing theme. I am loath to leave it. I am proud to be connected with such a party. It is to-day, as it has always been, the party of freedom and progress; it is never behind the age; it marches shoulder to shoulder with the present; it represents all that is good and great in the nation; it has saved the nation from destruction; it has enlarged and extended human liberty, and it will very soon, by the ratification of the fifteenth amendment, crown with justice the temple of the nation's freedom.

I shall now "move upon the works" of the Democracy. After what passed in this House a few days since I cannot take my seat, after having pronounced the duties of the Republican party and glanced at its past history, without presenting before this House and the country the Democratic party; and I impeach that party of high crimes and misdemeanors. In the name of a people whose executive and legislative trust it betrayed I impeach it as faithless to the nation and false to the Government it has sworn to preserve, protect, and defend. In the name of liberty I impeach it as false to our grand idea of human rights. In the name of honor, of common honesty, I impeach it as guilty of a deliberate attempt to destroy our national credit and spread commercial ruin through every State county, city, village, and hamlet in the land.

I will not trace the history of the Democratic party during the years 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, and 1865. The details are too sickening. *Stat nominis umbra!* Like the hypocrite who steals the livery of the court of Heaven to serve the devil in, so Democratic leaders stole the name Democracy to serve Jeff. Davis in. History will teach to the latest pos-

terity that all through those dark and dreadful years of the nation the Democratic party, in all its acts as a political organization, in its secret conspiracies, and in the public utterances of many of its leaders, gave aid and encouragement to the rebellion of the southern States, the blackest conspiracy that ever scourged the earth. Had their mad schemes succeeded, like the petty South American republics, we should have been engaged in continual broils. Border raids, bitter feuds, and deadly internecine wars would have drenched the whole land in blood; peace would have fled the habitations of men, and only the "Cains of humanity walked proudly with impious brow about the ruins of liberty on earth."

Such was the banquet to which we were invited. Oh, Democracy! Democracy! how many crimes have been committed in thy name! The last vestige of principle had abandoned the party. It lay a stranded hulk through whose shattered sides the quintessence of Democracy had all leaked out, and good men fled from it as rats flee from a sinking ship.

From the beginning of the war to the present moment our political opponents have had but one policy, to predict evil and then labor to verify the prediction. They prophesied that the rebellion could not be crushed by war, and then exerted all their energies to make good the prophecy. They predicted the success of the rebel confederacy, and then assisted the rebels in their work. They said the war was a failure, and then tried to make it so. They predicted a war of races in the South, and then tried every means possible to bring on a war of races. They prophesied that "greenbacks" would be utterly worthless, and ever since the war they have advocated just that course which if adopted would inevitably make them worthless; and now, in furtherance of the scheme, the gentleman from Indiana, my colleague, who addressed the House on Friday of last week, proposes to issue \$1,600,000,000 of "greenbacks" in addition to our present currency. Then that prophecy will be fulfilled; and as the distinguished Democratic candidate for the Vice Presidency in 1864 predicted in this Hall, "greenbacks" will indeed go forth "with the mark of Cain upon them, fugitives and vagabonds upon the earth."

From the beginning of the war, right on through those bloody years, and up to this moment, the Democracy have predicted the downfall and ruin of the national credit, and have never ceased to labor for the verification of their predictions; but with most obstinate and unreasonable persistency, the credit of the nation has steadily improved since March 4, 1869, in spite of their ill-omened work. As it is impossible now to calculate how much the encouragement afforded the rebellion by the Democratic party prolonged the war, or how much it added to the burden of the national debt, or by how many scores of thousands it swelled the numbers of the maimed and the slain, so we never shall be able to estimate in its full force the depreciation of our national wealth and the crippling of our material progress by Democratic threats of repudiation, open and covert. At threat of repudiation from a great party benumbs all the channels of trade as the shock of a galvanic battery does the human system.

And when I speak of threats of repudiation I allude not only to the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. MUGEN] or the gentleman from Kentucky, [Mr. GOLLADAY;] I allude as well to the more dangerous, because more polished and plausible blandishments of the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. VOORHEES.] More dangerous for another reason, because in his covert repudiation he has a larger following. The party stands at his back and cheers him on to the same goal which his *confreres* in repudiation have reached by one step, while he takes two. Sir, you saw the party gather around him the other day and give him hearty greeting when he had finished. Their

congratulations were given not so much for his polished eloquence as for the winding walks and flower strewn pathways by which he conducted them to the mephitic gulf into which the gentleman from Kentucky sprang at a bound. They stand aloof, and coldly, nay, hotly rebuke those who call things by their right names, who with more honesty but less discretion say boldly, "Wipe out the debt by a refusal to pay." This is the goal they desire to reach; but they would not travel it in the blaze of day; they prefer to walk through pleasant by-paths, well shaded with green. You know the approval my colleague received; and shall I prove to you that his speech means repudiation from the beginning to the end of it? Does the gentleman deny that such is the fact? Himself shall be my witness. Out of his own mouth will I condemn him. He foots up the amount of debt which he says has no consideration, and he makes it \$1,550,558,956; largely more than one-half the entire debt, principal and interest all told. And here is what he says of this portion of the debt—I read from the *Globe*: that this—

"Vast proportion of the public debt as it is stated upon paper has no existence whatever in reality; that it is a fiction created by unjust and scandalous legislation, or the still more unjust and scandalous perversion of the true contract: that it is a fraud fastened upon the labor of the nation utterly without consideration either legal or moral."

And again he pronounces it—

"A speculation as wholly and totally unsupported by a particle of consideration as the highwayman's profits upon a midnight adventure." * * *

"I propose to tear away the obscuring veils which have heretofore shrouded this question. I shall run a dividing line between the sound and the unsound, that an honest people may see plainly their duty to themselves and their posterity."

I should not talk in that way about a private debt which I owed if I intended to pay it, and if the gentleman owed me and talked of his obligations after that style I should expect to get my money by law, if I got it at all. He is ready, then, by his own words to strike down more than one half the debt, covering up the repudiator's tracks by arguing a want of consideration. But this is not all. He proposes an issue of currency for the "payment" of the five-twenty bonds, and then says:

"Three-fourths of the debt would be paid, and the balance can be encountered with hope and without systematic oppression."

I may be very ignorant. My experience in this body is but short; but, with most plain people, I have supposed that the legal-tender note was a debt which the Government was legally and morally bound to pay; yet here is my distinguished friend assuring us that when the five-twenty bonds are cancelled by an issue of \$1,600,000,000 of greenbacks "three-fourths of the debt will be paid." I cannot understand it. I never could, though I have heard it so much. If I could understand it I think I could soon accumulate a fortune by running in debt. I would commence with my friend and colleague. I would borrow \$5,000 from him, giving him my bond, payable in one year at six per cent. When the year came around I would hand him my note of hand without interest and payable at my pleasure, receive my bond, and tell him he is paid. Of course he would be content, for that is his theory. I think I could make a fortune in a few months, provided Democrats will practice what they preach.

Is this kind of trickery "payment?" It is nothing but repudiation, and very thinly disguised at that. I confess I prefer the bold advance of the gentleman from Kentucky. There was a very good old lady once told her pastor that she wished to ask him a question which had perplexed her mind for more than twenty years. He bent his ear to listen, and said she, "When Elijah was taken to Heaven in a chariot of fire, did he go straight up or did he go slantindicular?" I do not know the good pastor's answer; but for myself, if I were seated in Elijah's flaming car, as I would rather go direct than slantwise to Heaven, so I would rather spring "sheer over

the crystal battlements" direct into the bottomless pit of repudiation than to be blown about in a "limbo" of greenbacks, zigzagging down into the same bottomless gulf. Yes, if I were going to repudiate the national debt I would strike openly and with imperial boldness; and, for the encouragement of the gentleman, from Kentucky, I can assure him that he is following an illustrious example. The idea of repudiation is not original with any of the gentlemen of this House, whether advocating it in its open or its covert form. They have an illustrious master in this bad iniquity—

"He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower."

In all history there is no more repulsive character than Philip II of Spain. Every fiber of man's nature, every sentiment of humanity, revolts and sickens at the view of this monster clad in crime as with a garment. It was fitting that human depravity should find its "lowest deep" in such a wretch, and that he, the living embodiment of crime—himself a hell—should teach the nations and his disciples in the American Congress how to wipe out the debts he had created. I give you his words after he had lost the Spanish Armada, after he had ravaged the Netherlands, desolated Protestant Europe, and created a burden of debt not easily borne. Listen to the imperial ukase:

"Whereas it has come to our knowledge that notwithstanding all which our royal incomes from this monarchy and from without have yielded," * * * "we find ourselves now so wholly exhausted and ruined, and, as it were, reduced to nothing, that although the foremost cause of this ruin is the great and incredible expense with which we have sustained and are still enduring for the protection of Christendom, other chief causes are the grievous damages, discounts, and interest which have been forced upon us, and which at present obtain in the finances, bills of exchange, and other obligations which have been made and taken up in our name, since we could not escape the same, in order to provide for our so entirely necessary and pressing necessities." * * * "Therefore to put an end to such financiering and unlawful practices with bills of exchange, to the disservice of the Lord God and of us, with great injury to our kingdom," * * * "we have now given command to devise some means of restoring order;" * * * "and we have found no other remedy than to call in and to disburden our royal incomes, liberating the same from the unjust damage put upon them through this financiering and bills of exchange, which we have suffered and are continuing to suffer, at the time we made such contracts, in order to avoid still greater embarrassments that would have arisen had there been want of provision for our military affairs." * * * "Accordingly we suspend, and declare suspended, all such assignments made by us in any manner whatsoever;" * * * "and we order the moneys coming from such pledged property to be henceforth paid into our royal treasury, for the support of our own necessities, declaring from this day forth all payments otherwise made to be null and void."

This was perfectly simple. There was no attempt to disguise the villainy of the "transaction." Would you know the effect of this high-handed outrage? The historian may answer:

"The effect of the promulgation of this measure was instantaneous. Two millions and a half of bills of exchange sold by the Cardinal Albert came back in one day protested. The chief merchants and bankers of Europe suspended payment. Their creditors became bankrupt. At the Frankfort fair there were more failures in one day than there had ever been in all the years since Frankfort existed. In Genoa alone a million dollars of interest were confiscated. It was no better in Antwerp; but Antwerp was already ruined. There was a general howl of indignation and despair upon every exchange, in every counting-room, in every palace, in every cottage in Christendom. Such a tremendous repudiation of national debts was never heard of before. There had been debasements of the currency, petty frauds by kings upon their unfortunate peoples; but such a crime as this had never been conceived by human heart before."

"Had never been conceived by human heart before." Then the former days were better than these; for here in this august presence, before the features of your illustrious early statesmen, beneath the goddess which crowns your Capitol, we find the disciples of Philip II.

And what would be the effect of such a measure here? It would be as instantaneous as in Europe. Scores and hundreds of millions of bills would be protested. Our chief merchants and bankers would suspend payment. Their creditors would become bankrupt. There would be more failures in our principal cities in one day than in all the years since we have been a nation. Merchants, wholesale and retail, jobbers, bankers and brokers, savings banks, and life, fire, and marine insurance companies, manufacturers, and tradesmen of every kind and degree would come down in one total crash. A general bowl of indignation would arise from every

quarter of the land. The wail of despair would be heard in the palace of the rich and the log-hut of the pioneer. Hundreds of thousands would be deprived of their daily employment and their daily bread. Starvation would come to add its horrors to the scene. All Europe would stagger under the blow, and an indignant world would unite to blot America from the map of the nations. An easy task; for no man, native or foreign, would lift a hand or offer a penny in defense of a nation with a repudiated debt, prostrate and ruined business, and a starving population.

Sir, I believe the American people are honest. I believe they are willing to pay their just debts. I believe they would bow their heads in the dust with shame if they thought the Government would refuse the payment of its righteous indebtedness. I have faith in the American people, and I should not dare to look my constituents in the face if I did not indignantly deny for them the charge that they are willing to repudiate one dollar of what they justly owe. I will not impute to them, or permit others to impute to them, such amazing dishonesty. They may be poor in purse, but they are rich in integrity, and a good name is to them above rubies. Their hands are hardened with toil, but no stain of dishonesty rests upon them, nor ever will by their consent. They will not stultify their manhood, and at the same time bring irretrievable disaster on the material interests of the country. I look with pride on our present wonderful physical resources and progress. I see commerce running a career unparalleled in all the past. I see the Atlantic coast wedded to the Pacific, and the marriage-ring is iron. I see the Old World wedded to the new, and the hymeneal bond is an electric cord at the bottom of the sea. I see our inland commerce, agriculture, manufactures, and mining interests adding scores of millions annually to our national wealth, and his rich and fruitful present tells me that repudiators will be scattered by an honest and prosperous people as doves flee from a farmer's barn "when summer lightnings stab the roof."

And, looking down the future, I see a people happy in the consciousness of their integrity. I see this people rising in power and dignity among the nations. It has "fought a good fight" and "triumphed gloriously." It "has kept the faith" with its creditors, and it stands in the pure white light of truth, honor and honesty its chief ornament and crowning glory. I see the nation speeding on in her unrivaled career; peace dwelling in all her borders; all her material interests gaining new conquests; education humanizing and elevating the humblest and poorest; a people free, intelligent, enterprising, rich and powerful; protection and equal rights guaranteed to all, the fabled Atlantis realized at last in liberty regulated by law.

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